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Mr. Donald
ADDRESS.

**Quarterly Meeting of the Eastern
and West River**

TEMPERANCE SOCIETIES.

ON OCTOBER, 1855.

BY THE REV. JOHN MACLEAN.

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ADDRESS.

So much having been published of late concerning the properties of Ardent Spirits and their effects on Society, it will not, I apprehend, be necessary for me to occupy much of your time in adding proof of the propositions I am about to advance. By many it will doubtless be admitted as undeniable, as soon as they are announced. Others however may yet, for want of consideration, be disposed to doubt them. For the benefit of these I will connect my propositions with a specimen of the evidence by which they may be supported; and having done so, I trust all who favour with a candid hearing, will be prepared to acquiesce in the logical deductions to which I shall come.

My first proposition is, that *Ardent Spirits are proving of incalculable injury to mankind, more universally operative in the production of disease, crime, poverty, and misery, than any other external cause to be found in Christian countries.*

The evidence for the truth of this assertion is fearfully abundant. The only difficulty is, to make a judicious selection from the immense mass which presents itself. In proof of the influence of Ardent Spirits in the PRODUCTION of MISERY, I may adduce the testimony of a large proportion of the most eminent Physicians in Europe and America. They are the most competent, certainly, to form a correct judgment on this subject; and their testimony is in this case peculiarly valuable, because it must be disinterested. It is not their pecuniary interest to condemn the use of Ardent Spirits; for they may say here, like the Silver-smiths of Athens, "by this we have our wealth." In addition to this, their statements are also corroborated by the universal experience

of mankind. The amount of their testimony on the subject is as follows.—That Distilled Spirits possess no nutritive properties; and that the habitual use of them tends materially to shorten life, by destroying the organs necessary to existence. No man in health say they, can use distilled liquors daily to gratify his appetite, without certain injury to his constitution; and the reason is, that they are a powerful poison. That in ardent spirits which gives them their intoxicating power, and that for which alone they are desired, is Alcohol. Now Alcohol is ranked with opium, arsenic, and other poisons; because like these a very small quantity of it is sufficient to destroy animal life. By experiment it has been found, that seven drachms, which is about a wine glass of proof Spirits, introduced into the stomach of a rabbit, produces death in a little more than half an hour; and that the same quantity would prove fatal to a robust dog, in three or four hours:—and cases are not wanting in which, even in this diluted state, it has proved almost instantly fatal to children, whose constitutions had not become injured to the use of it. Proof Spirits, let it be recollected, are only one half alcohol. A gill or thereabouts of pure alcohol would destroy the life of almost any man, however robust, who had not previously in some measure habituated himself to the use of it. The circumstance that men come by habit to take much greater quantities than this daily, without any immediately fatal consequences, is no proof that Alcohol is not a poison. A few grains of opium would destroy any person not accustomed to the use of it; yet by constant use, the Turks come to chew it in large quantities, as tobacco is chewed among us,—not however without experiencing ultimately the worst effects from its influence on the constitution. A horse it is said will take a drachm of arsenic daily, and continue to thrive, and a very small quantity taken daily, seems not to affect a man, in the mean time; yet who will deny that opium and arsenic are powerful poisons, and as certainly are Distilled Spirits. He who drinks Spirits daily, let it be recollected that I am all along quoting the published opinions of the most eminent Physicians, may not for years perceive injurious effects from the practice, and when its effects become apparent, in the shape of various diseases, he may ascribe them to other causes; but complicated complaints will after a time creep upon him, making life a burden, and inducing premature dissolution: and thousands and tens of thousands fall victims to the use of ardent spirits, who never were seen to stag-

ger under their influence, and never once suspected that this was the cause of their ailments and approaching dissolution. "It is our opinion therefore," say they farther, "that the disuse of ardent spirits would tend much to improve the health and comfort of Society, as well as greatly to diminish existing poverty and immorality." Sir Astley Cooper of London, one of the most celebrated surgeons of the present day, says, "no person has greater hostility to dram drinking than myself; inasmuch as I never suffer any ardent Spirits in my house, thinking them Evil Spirits;—and if the poor could see the white livers, the dropsies, and shattered nervous systems, which I have seen as the consequence of drinking Spirits, they would be aware that Spirits and poisons are synonymous terms."

After patient investigation it is stated on the highest authority, that about 30,000 die annually in the United States of drunkenness. It has also been ascertained, and was stated at a meeting of the British and Foreign Temperance Society, by the Bishop of London, who is a zealous advocate of these Institutions, that the most terrible of all diseases, insanity, may in half the cases in which it occurs in Britain and Ireland, be ascribed to Intemperance. Of 781 maniacs in two Asylums in Great Britain, 392 were upon enquiry found to have brought on their derangement by drinking; and this may have been the case with a considerable number more. Nor need we be surprised that Ardent Spirits destroy reason. When taken into the stomach, the Alcohol they contain mixes with the chyle which goes to the formation of the blood. Combining with the blood it is circulated through the whole system, and the consequence is, that the vessels of the brain as well as others become loaded with it. Dr. Kirk of Greenock states, that he dissected, a few hours after death, a man who died in a state of intoxication, and that from the lateral ventricles of the brain he took a fluid distinctly perceived by the smell to contain whiskey; and farther, that when he applied a candle to it in a spoon, it took fire and burnt blue, "the lambent blue flame characteristic of the poison," he says "playing for some seconds on the surface of the spoon." Is it wonderful then that the habitual use of Spirits impairs men's intellect, and that persons in a state of intoxication will commit actions, from which they would shrink with horror in their sober moments? They are under a temporary derangement—and it ought not cer-

certainly to appear surprising, that excessive drinking frequently issues in incurable madness, when we recollect that of the poison taken into the stomach a portion is carried by the circulation of the blood, and lodged in the brain.

What again is the influence of Ardent Spirits in the PRODUCTION of CRIME? Ask the Judges and Magistrates, the Judicial Authorities in Britain and America, what is the chief cause that excites the thousands and tens of thousands of criminals, who annually appear before them, to the commission of their respective crimes, and they will tell you after careful calculations, that in four cases out of five or thereabouts, their thefts, frauds, assaults, murders, and robberies, are the consequences of intemperance. Nor need we depend solely on their testimony. Surely we have all witnessed enough of its effects, to convince us that this vice operates like a floodgate for the introduction of almost all the others by which Society is deluged.—That it is the tendency of this, above every other that can be named, to destroy in man every thing that is noble in principle and purpose; to steel the heart against the influence of moral and religious motives, and to prepare him necklessly to follow the dictates of every fiendish principle, and brutal propensity.

Then look at the POVERTY OF WHICH IT IS PRODUCTIVE. In the United States alone there are 200,000 paupers supported at an expense of 10,000,000 of dollars annually. Of these 150,000, or three fourths of the whole number, have come to poverty by this vice; and these self-made beggars are an annual cost to the nation of 7,500,000 dollars; and this must be paid chiefly by the temperate portion of the population. Allow Intemperance to be but as productive of pauperism in Great Britain and Ireland, and it is doubtless more so, and we will have an array of 250,000 persons reduced to the condition of paupers by the use of spirituous liquors, and supported at an expense to the nation of about £4,000,000 Sterling. And what are these to the tens and hundreds of thousands of families in Britain and Ireland, whom this vice holds in the lowest state of ignorance and degradation and wretchedness, though they are not on the list of parish paupers?

And if Intemperance is filling these lands in the length and breadth of them, with disease and poverty, madness and crime, and

mourning and death, how is it affecting men's eternal interests? Can you believe that to any of all these tens of thousands, who annually in despite of the admonitions and entreaties of relatives, and friends, in contempt of the warnings and mandates of heaven, drink away, their property, their usefulness, and finally their health and their lives, and pass into the world of spirits, sustaining the character of impenitent suicides, it can be said, "Well done good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord"? Does not the solemn declaration held up before us every day on the page of Revelation, "drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God" place it beyond dispute, that an awfully different end awaits them? But this is not all—how many hundreds of thousands of children are, by the intemperance of their parents, left destitute of all intellectual and religious culture, and exposed to every species of demoralising example and influence, to their final destruction! Were the curtain which veils the world of Spirits from our view drawn aside, and did we behold a company of 80 or 100,000 of the inhabitants of these Countries sinking every year into the bottomless pit, through the influence of Intemperance, and a new levy of immortal beings continually filling up their places, in due time to descend after them, would we not turn away appalled at the sight, and strain every nerve to awaken our fellow men to a sense of the destructive tendency of these liquors, and to induce them to abandon the use of them? And can we persuade ourselves that this is not really the case, though we see it not with our bodily eyes? They who will compare the state of Society with the declarations of the Bible, will not want evidence that it is actually so.

Some probably will be ready to object here that it is only the abuse of ardent spirits that is productive of these effects, that if mankind would only use them temperately, these consequences would not follow. It is true, that if this were the case, the bad effects which would result from the use of them would be comparatively few and trivial. But where the temperate use is the intemperate use, with all its train of evils will be also; and here therefore arises the necessity for the entire banishment of these liquors from Society. The history of every country and every community without a solitary exception, furnishes proof that wherever distilled Liquors are habitually used, the people will in multi-

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tudes become intemperate—that just in proportion as the temperate use prevails, intemperance will prevail also. And such are the properties of ardent Spirits and their effects on the human constitution, that this will always be the case. These are I believe almost always overlooked by the advocates of temperate drinking.

One distinguishing and fatal characteristic of distilled Spirits or Alcohol, that which makes even the moderate use dangerous, and so often terminate in hopeless intemperance, is this—that the habitual use tends more or less to beget an appetite for them in almost every constitution, which becomes more craving and insatiable, the more it is indulged till it becomes a tyrant whose will the enslaved victim has no power to resist. It is not so with milk or water, or any other of nature's beverages. Though I drink milk to day, it produces no desire to drink more than is necessary to-morrow; and even a surfeit to day produces no desire to renew it, and when a man has used milk for a dozen years, he feels no more inclined to drink of it to excess, than he did the first day he tasted it. The same is the case with water and some healthful mixtures. But it is altogether different with Alcoholic liquors, and particularly distilled Spirits. The oftener a man accustoms himself to drink of them daily, the oftener he desires to drink; and this is not all—the longer he habituates himself to the daily use of them, he continually requires a larger and larger draught to satisfy him. He who begins with a glass a day gradually finds an appetite for the article growing upon him, so that he desires to have his dram oftener, and to have more at each time than when he first commenced the use of it. Thus multitudes drink on, taking their glass oftener, and enlarging their measure, till they have nursed and reared an appetite within them, which completely overpowers them. Insatiable as the grave, it is continually crying give, give, and leaves them no rest but when surfeited with drink, when in a state of at least partial intoxication. It is true that the thirst or appetite grows much more readily in some than in others; but the preceding is a true account of the general tendency of the habitual use of distilled liquors. It is therefore impossible to tolerate the moderate use of them in any community, or in any class of men, and to prevent immoderate indulgence from following in innumerable instances, with all its melancholy catalogue of evils. Talk of putting down intemperance by limiting men to a moderate use of Ardent Spirits!

The temperate use is the source, the origin, the very nursery of all the intemperance which desolates the earth. The temperate use is the school in which all the Drunkards in the world are reared. No man becomes a drunkard in a day, nor commences the use of ardent spirits with the intention of becoming one; but this is the end to which the temperate use with which he sets out too often brings him. There is no way left then of delivering Society from Intemperance and its melancholy consequences, but by banishing Ardent Spirits with other poisons to the shop of the Apothecary. They may, like opium and arsenic, be of benefit to the human constitution in particular cases; but the Physician is the only proper judge of the cases in which they may be so, and of the quantity which it may be expedient to take.

When estimating the evils which the use of Ardent Spirits is inflicting on Society, we ought not to overlook the immense waste of property which it involves. It appears from Government Returns which may be implicitly relied on, that the inhabitants of Britain and Ireland expend at the lowest calculation, twenty millions of pounds Sterling annually, in the purchase of distilled liquors; and that upwards of four hundred millions have, during the last twenty years, been expended, in this way—a sum equal to one half of the whole onerous amount of the National debt. In addition to this it must also be kept in view, that about five millions of the poor rates paid by the country are a consequence of the use made of these liquors by the people. Taking the above sum of twenty millions of pounds as the amount paid annually by the United Kingdom for Ardent Spirits, we are presented with this overwhelming fact, that Britain, enlightened evangelized Britain, with all her boasted Christian enterprises, consumes more in the purchase of these liquors annually, than she has expended by all her Societies in giving Christianity to the world during the last hundred years! It is calculated, says Collins, one of the most zealous and judicious advocates of this cause in Britain, that there are 828,000,000 of people in the world. Supposing that 600,000,000 of these are still destitute of the word of God. At the rate Britain has been giving the Bible to the world for the last twenty five years, it would require upwards of *four thousand years* before she could give a bible to every individual of those now destitute. But allowing each Bible to cost four shillings Sterling, it is a striking fact

that if she would abandon the use of Ardent Spirits, and devote to this object what these now cost her, she would be able to give a Bible to every individual of these 600,000,000 now above six years of age, in *four years and a half*. Yes, on the strength of this sacrifice alone, independent of the aid of any other country, could she achieve this glorious object ; and is there a man worthy of the name of a Christian who would not surrender the use of Distilled liquors for the achievement of such an end? Or if Britain and the United States of America would unite their funds, they might with what they now expend in this way, continually maintain a Pastor at £150 a year, for every three thousand people of the whole 600 millions who are yet without the Gospel.

Is it wonderful that abject poverty and wretchedness are becoming the lot of a large proportion of the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland, when at least 20 millions of pounds and that chiefly from the earnings of the working classes, are yearly thrown away on the purchase of these poisons ; and when five millions more must be raised annually in the shape of poor rates, for the support of those whom Intemperance has impoverished? Can a Nation prosper with such a drain on her resources, and such a drawback on her industry, as the use of these liquors occasions? Is it not probable, that this single cause is doing more than any other that can be named, to blight the prosperity of these countries, and to drive their population in thousands to seek a subsistence in foreign lands.

In this waste of property, the inhabitants of this Province, and certainly those of this District as well as of other parts of it, are deeply implicated. There were eight hundred and eighty seven thousand, three hundred and fifty two gallons of Rum, Brandy, and Gin, imported into this Province in 1833, and about one-third of this quantity again exported. The present annual consumption of Ardent Spirits in this Province, must therefore be rated at nearly *six hundred thousand* gallons, and the amount paid by the consumers at *one hundred and fifty thousand pounds*. Let it be recollected that this is nearly three times the amount of the whole Provincial Revenue. Let it be recollected also that this is the expenditure of a people who taken collectively, cannot raise more than thirty or forty pounds as an annual salary for the Teachers of their Schools, who are affording

but about five or six hundred pounds a year for the entire support of their highest seminaries of Learning; a sum not equal to the provision often made for the support of a Grammar School in other countries, and of a people who instead of aiding to any extent in the diffusion of the Gospel over the earth, are still to a considerable extent, receiving aid from another country for the support of the Gospel among themselves. And are these Spirits like food or clothing, or even the elegancies of life, necessary to our existence or conducive to our welfare or improvement? Can it be denied that it would be in every way beneficial to the country were there never to be another puncheon of spirits brought into its ports? And is it wise to give this enormous sum annually for that which, is instead of being beneficial, positively injurious in every point of view?

Turn now and examine what proportion of this expenditure of ardent spirits this district has contributed. I have it from the Custom House books, that four hundred and twenty puncheons or fifty thousand four hundred gallons of Rum alone were brought into the Port of Pictou during the year 1833.* Of this immense quantity there is no account of any having been again exported. Doubtless a portion of it was sent to the Fisheries, some part of it up coastwise to Tatamagouche and Wallace, and a few puncheons more may have been sent off in other directions; but we have no means of ascertaining the precise amount which may have been disposed of in these ways. Let us however for the sake of illustration, fix the quantity thus again sent out of the district at one hundred and twenty puncheons or fourteen thousand four hundred gallons; which will I have reason to believe be admitted by all as likely to exceed the real amount. After making this large deduction, thirty six thousand gallons must still have been consumed within this district during the past year, which is about two and a half gallons for every man, woman, and child, which it contains. Let us suppose that of this gross amount eighteen thousand gallons were sold to the consumers from the retail shops, at four shillings and sixpence per gallon, and that the other eighteen

* Though delivered in October, this address was not printed till the following March. The Author was in consequence enabled to bring his calculations down to the end of 1833, and to rectify some inaccuracies in them, by a reference to the Custom House Returns.

thousand were retailed in public houses, at nine pence per half pint. According to this estimate the inhabitants of the district must have expended fourteen thousand eight hundred and fifty pounds upon Rum alone during the past year, for I have not taken into the account the comparatively small quantity of Gin and Brandy which may have been used. Surely this fact alone is sufficient to convict you of intemperance as a community, and to evince the necessity for reform. Were you required to collect £14,850 annually from this district and to cast the whole into the sea, would you not conclude that to rise above poverty with such a tax upon the product of your industry would be altogether impossible? Now it requires no argument to shew that the community would be much more likely to rise to independence and comfort, were this amount of property disposed of in this way, than it is now. when this sum is annually swallowed down in Spirituous Liquors; because it would not then in addition to this loss of property, be injured also by the waste of time, the diminution of industry, and the careless and wasteful habits which the consumption of these liquors invariably produces. Must it not be both highly imprudent and heinously criminal, to expend such an amount of property in this way, while every benevolent and religious object is languishing among you for want of support.

Compare the amount of property expended in this way, with the whole amount devoted annually by the district to the promotion of the intellectual and religious improvement of its inhabitants, and to the great work of evangelizing the world. There are eleven Clergymen supported in this district say at £150 each, about fifty Teachers of Schools at £30 each exclusive of the government aid. Allow £100 to be expended annually in the purchase of books, &c. for these schools, £100 for the support of Sabbath Schools, the Bible Society and Missionary purposes, £150 in fees and contributions to the Academy erected among you, and £150 for the purchase of books for public and private Libraries—and we have £3,650 as the very utmost amount that can be supposed to be raised among you for the promotion of your highest interests, as intellectual and immortal beings, and those of the rising generation, and for sending the gospel to the 600,000,000 of our fellow men, who are perishing for lack of knowledge—while nearly fifteen thousand pounds or more than four times that amount are

raised annually without a murmur, to gratify an artificial appetite, and an appetite, the indulgence of which is in every respect injurious to both the body and mind. While you waste to such an awful extent the bounties of Providence and the product of your labours, can you consistently pray Him whose are the dew and the rain, the silver and the gold, to prosper you in your worldly avocations—or can you rationally expect the pecuniary interests of the community generally to be in a healthy and flourishing condition? Whatever effect other causes may have, doubtless much, very much, of the poverty to be found in these Provinces, and in this Section of the Country as well as elsewhere, may be traced to the intemperate habits of the people. It is doubtless owing to the awful waste of time and property, and the careless and prodigal habits which the consumption of Ardent Spirits is every where producing, that our Fisheries and many of our farms are so unproductive, and it is because many of the people in consequence of their intemperate habits do not improve the means of wealth which are within their reach, and have therefore little to give in exchange for the commodities of other countries, that the trading part of the community find their sales so limited and their gains so small. And here I would say to those engaged in Trade, cease to import and to vend Spirituous liquors to the people and you will soon find that in thus benefiting the Community, you are to the same extent promoting your own pecuniary interests.

Confining ourselves to the sum of £14,850 as the cost of Spirits to the District, for the last year, let us in order to illustrate the extent to which the interests of this Section of the country would be promoted by abandoning totally the use of distilled liquors, make it the basis of a few plain calculations, which all may readily comprehend. We have here an amount sufficient to maintain for the District 15 Clergymen, instead of 11, and at £200 each—75 Teachers of youth at £100 each exclusive of the provincial aid, which would ensure the services of reputable and competent persons—2 Missaries constantly in the field for the destitute parts of these Provinces at £150 each—4 Missionaries continually in Heathen Countries at £200 each—2 more Teachers for our Academy at £200 each—and 2 divinity Professors for the adequate instruction of candidates for the Gospel Ministry at £250 each. After paying all these sums there would remain a sufficiency to devote £300 Annually to aid the funds of the British and Foreign Bible

Society, £350 to procure the most approved Books for the Common and Sabbath Schools, £200 for the establishment of Libraries, £500 to pay your District taxes, and £1000 to be applied yearly for the encouragement of Agriculture and the Fisheries.

Would you then but abandon totally the use of distilled Spirits, and devote the property now expended for them to these purposes, all these objects might be accomplished, numerous and expensive as they doubtless are, without taxing yourselves a single farthing beyond what you now pay. And so far from being impoverished by such an expenditure, when applied in this way, the community would become far more prosperous in its pecuniary affairs, and more abundant in its resources than it is at present, inasmuch as its members would then become more intelligent, moral, industrious and economical, and nearly all their contributions to these objects would annually be returned to them by the receivers in payment for the products of their industry or for their merchandize. I would only add here that I can never contemplate the opposition which intemperance is every where presenting to the growth of religion in christian countries, and the immense saving of property which the disuse of ardent spirits throughout these countries would effect, without being strongly impressed with an apprehension that in taking these out of the way, or inducing men generally to abandon them, God is on the one hand preparing the way to make his gospel far more generally efficacious in turning men unto holiness where it is already enjoyed, than it has ever yet proved, and on the other about to provide means in abundance for sending it, according to the many and glorious promises of his word, to the millions upon whom its light has not yet risen.

Are these things then so, my friends? Is the use of ardent spirits preying to this extent on your worldly prosperity? Is it consuming to the enormous extent which has been described the product of your labours? Is it in the same ratio depriving you of the means of supporting and advancing such objects as are necessary to your own present and eternal welfare, and of aiding in the work of the world's renovation? Is it dooming many a family among you to poverty and wretchedness—excluding many a group of children from all intellectual and religious culture, and drowning hundreds among you in everlasting perdition—and are you

not called upon by the voice of duty, the example of others, by your love to your neighbours, your relatives, and your own souls, to exert yourselves to the utmost, in every lawful way to put down an evil so enormous?

II. A second proposition which I assume is—that while the use of distilled Spirits is thus destructive to an incalculable extent of the best interests of mankind, it is not productive of the slightest amount of good to counterbalance this evil—that even the moderate use is not productive of the least amount of good to mankind. The opinions that the moderate use of these liquors tends to fortify the human constitution against the effects of heat and cold, to strengthen men to endure fatigue, to defend them from the attacks of infectious diseases, and that they help digestion, are all exploded. That they are not good or necessary for men in health is now one of the best established, one of the most incontrovertible facts of Medical Science. *Stimulating* let it be remembered is not *strengthening*, but *weakening* and *impairing* the system, and this is all that spirits do,—they simply *stimulate*. They produce a temporary excitement or unnatural effort at the expense of a corresponding depression afterwards. The man who is excited and invigorated in this artificial and unnatural way, sinks when the liquor ceases to operate upon him as much below his natural strength as it had raised him above it. To remove this depression he drinks again, and in this way goes on excited and depressed alternately, imagining all the while that his glasses are strengthening and benefitting him, because he always feels his spirits raised and his strength invigorated when he drinks, though his constitution is in the mean time wearing out under this unnatural treatment, and also becoming predisposed to a variety of diseases, to some of which it is but too likely ultimately to fall a prey.

In all the diversified circumstances of life, in every department of human labour on the land and the ocean, amid the snows and frost of a Polar winter, under the burning rays of a tropical sun and in the midst of the pestilence that walketh in darkness the experiment has been tried, and man has been found to enjoy a larger measure of health and strength to be safer and more happy without ardent spirits than with them. Whose testimony should we take on this subject, that of those who have never made the experiment or of those who have? In England above 40,000 per-

sons stand pledged to entire abstinence from distilled liquors—in Scotland upwards of 50,000, and in the United States 500,000 including about 5000 reformed drunkards, and about a million more are practising it. Six hundred vessels sail from the ports of the United States to all parts of the world without a drop of spirits except it be as a medicine; and a number more from Britain. We have then in these two countries alone upwards of a million and a half of people, exclusive of the many thousands more in Ireland, on the Continent of Europe, and in these Provinces, whose numbers I am unable to state, the greater part of whom once used ardent spirits, and no doubt like others regarded them as conducive to health and bodily and mental vigour, and are now pursuing their varied avocations without them. Now what is the testimony of this host of witnesses who have known what it is to use them and now know what it is to do without them? Do you find any considerable number of these returning to the ranks of moderate drinkers, and testifying that their health has suffered in consequence of their abstinence, or that they cannot endure the exposure and fatigue to which their avocations subject them without these stimulants? Do you find them declaring that in any point of view they are losers by their abstinence? Do you not, on the contrary find all this host of witnesses unanimous in their testimony, that having tried both moderate drinking and entire abstinence, they are more healthy and vigorous in body and mind without distilled liquors, than with them; and that the supposition, that they are in any respect good or necessary, as an article of drink or refreshment it is an utter delusion? It is true, that a few straggling individuals are continually dropping off and returning to the use of these liquors, but it will generally be found that they are influenced by other motives than a rational conviction, after a sufficient trial, that they have really been injured by their abstinence.

We have then the positive testimony of the most eminent Physicians in Britain, Ireland, and America, that Ardent Spirits, even when taken in moderation, are not productive of the smallest amount of good; that on the contrary they are positively injurious to the human constitution, in every situation and avocation of life, and just in proportion to the extent to which they are used. We have this testimony confirmed by upwards of a million and a half of the most intelligent, industrious, and credible inhabitants of these countries, pursuing every lawful avocation on sea and land, who have

tried both the use and the disuse, and who are therefore fully qualified to give a correct testimony in the matter: and shall we reject the testimony of all this host of witnesses—witnesses the best qualified to give a correct testimony in the case, and whose testimony is most worthy of credit—and still believe that the habitual use of these Spirits is beneficial when they are taken in moderation, because the dram drinking part of the Community say so, who have never tried but one side of the question, and many of whom are too much enslaved to a debasing appetite to relinquish them, however advantageous the change might be?

There are now a considerable number of persons in this Community, and throughout the Province at large, who make no use of distilled liquors; are they less healthy, less vigorous, less fit for any of the avocations of life, or do they enjoy less rational comfort than those who still make these pernicious drinks a part of their daily diet or their customary beverage? If not, where is the advantage to be derived from the moderate use, to be an argument for continuing it or to counterbalance the immense injury which Intemperance is entailing upon mankind? The conclusion is unavoidable, that the use of these liquors is productive only of evil without one mitigating or redeeming circumstance.

My two propositions then are—I. *That Ardent Spirits are proving of incalculable injury to mankind, more universally operative in the production of DISEASE, CRIME, POVERTY and MISERY, than any other external cause to be found in Christian Countries:* and II. *That while they are destructive to an awful extent, of the best interests of mankind, even the moderate use of them is not productive of the slightest amount of good to counterbalance this evil.*

Here are two propositions which I may challenge the world to disprove. From these I now deduce two conclusions; and if these propositions be true beyond the possibility of a refutation, the conclusions must be equally so.

The first is, *that we are not at liberty that it is morally wrong to use Ardent Spirits, now that we are apprised of their nature and effects, except as we use other poisons when prescribed as medicine.* We are not at liberty it is morally wrong, because the habitual use of them tends to injure our constitution bodily and mental, to perdispose us to disease, and to shorten

life, which we are bound by all lawful endeavours to preserve. To use them is wrong, because the practice involves a sinful waste of property, which might be and ought to be devoted to beneficial purposes. To use them is wrong, because we cannot do so without being in danger of ultimately becoming intemperate. To use them is wrong, because in doing so we are lending our countenance and example to the support of a system which is filling the world with poverty, crime, and misery, and peopling Hell with its victims. To drink on still, is by our example and influence to oppose the work of reformation now commenced,—on which Heaven is smiling, and which God is crowning with success almost incredible—and to take part with the great Enemy of mankind, in keeping things as they are.

It may be asked here, but why require us to join a Temperance Society, or to sign a pledge that we will refrain from the use of these Liquors; is it not enough that we practise entire abstinence without this public avowal of our determination? The answer is it is enough for your own safety; but are you to have no regard to the safety of others? To abstain entirely is to secure yourselves against the evils which result from the use of distilled Liquors; but when you have done this, have you done all that is necessary or incumbent upon you? As well might a man when the town was on fire shut himself and his property up in a house, secured by a stone and slate exterior against the devouring element, and then say, "I and my property are out of danger, with the progress or suppression of the conflagration I have therefore no farther concern." When aware of the havock of property, morals, and life, which the use of these Liquors is making, are you not obligated to come forth and to exert yourselves to the utmost to suppress it? And are you not also solemnly obligated to adopt that plan which promises to be most effectual? Now where is the plan yet tried, which will bear a comparison as to efficacy with this of men coming forth and declaring before the public their conviction, that Ardent Spirits are in all cases not only useless, but positively injurious, as an article of drink or refreshment, and pledging themselves to each other not to use them themselves nor furnish them to others, and to employ all proper means to discourage the use of them in Society? Previous to the adoption of this plan good men lamented the growth of intemperance, the ministers of religion enforced the warnings and threatenings of the Bible against it, church courts made it the sub-

ject of ecclesiastical discipline, parents cautioned and admonished their children against it and some associated themselves together to discourage and put it down by a rigid adherence to sobriety in their drinking, and by endeavouring to induce others to follow their example. Still Intemperance continued to increase with fearful rapidity. Now you are aware of what has in a very few years been accomplished, by a comparatively small number in different quarters uniting in Societies on this principle and acting in concert. Nor can you deny that if double or ten times the present number enrol themselves and act in accordance with their pledge double or ten times the amount of good already effected is likely to be the result; or that Intemperance with all its melancholy consequences will decrease just in proportion to the increase of these Societies. This being the case, can any plead that they are not in common with others chargeable with perpetuating the effects which the use of ardent Spirits continues to inflict on society, while they refuse to lend their name and influence to these associations?

Say not we do not see it to be our duty to join these associations. Do you not perceive it to be your duty to "do good unto all men as you have opportunity;" and is it not the tendency of these Societies to do good and much good to mankind, and without inflicting upon any the slightest injury? Say not as some do that this way of promoting temperance is not sanctioned by the Gospel:—it is. The Gospel surely requires that an indulgence which is on the one hand useless, and on the other positively and greatly injurious in its consequences to ourselves and others, should be utterly abandoned; and to abandon such an indulgence, and endeavour to induce others to abandon it, is all that we pledge ourselves to do when we join a Temperance Society. Instead of being opposed to the Gospel, the constitution of Temperance Societies is just a pledge to act strictly up to the requirements and very spirit of the Gospel, in a particular and specified case. That Gospel which teaches us to pray "lead us not into temptation" certainly forbids us to expose ourselves to the danger of becoming intemperate unnecessarily, which we are certainly doing when we habitually use Ardent Spirits. And that Gospel which requires us to avoid carefully whatever proves a stumbling block to others, or tends to draw them into sin, certainly requires us to abandon and endeavour to put down the use of these liquors when that use is proving a cause of temporal and eternal ruin to vast numbers amongst and around us,

in every country in which it prevails. When the Gospel requires us to surrender all, even life itself, if necessary for the cause of Christ and the salvation of our brethren, it surely requires us to surrender a useless and pernicious indulgence when the cause of religion and humanity call for the sacrifice. It was on this principle that Paul acted when he declared "if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth lest I make my brother to offend." It was on this principle that he enjoined Christians to "look not every man on his own things, but every one also on the things of others"—and it was on this principle that the Son of God himself "for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich." Here then is both precept and example on our side the *authority* of which no christian can dispute. If there be any thing antichristian in our conduct in this matter, it cannot be in the *end* which we seek to promote, viz. entire abstinence from the use of distilled liquors; for surely there can be nothing sinful in refraining from the use of them—it must be in our *forming ourselves into societies* to accomplish this end that we are guilty of attempting to add to the plan of reforming the world which God has appointed and revealed. If in this we are guilty of what is here stated, then I would only remark, are all equally so, who form themselves into Societies to print and distribute the Scriptures or religious Tracts, to support Sabbath Schools or Missions to the Heathen, or any other Christian or Philanthropic enterprise; for there is no command in Scripture for the formation of any of these Societies more than there is for the formation of Temperance Societies.

Much has been said about the indelicacy if not impropriety of Females joining, or being requested to join in this work of reformation. I have however yet to learn in what the indelicacy or impropriety consists. Did we ask them to join lest they might themselves become intemperate, the request might to a certain extent be considered indelicate, though daily experience testifies that even they are not infallible in this respect. But it is chiefly for the good of others that we would solicit their co-operation. Though not in the habit of using and consequently in no danger of being injured by these liquors themselves, many are in the habit of giving them to their visitors and friends, to their servants and their children, and thus of perpetuating the use of them and contributing to the formation of intemperate habits in others. Our object in uniting in

Societies is not so much to save ourselves from intemperance, though we will in every respect be benefited by our abstinence as to put down as far as possible the use of Ardent Spirits in Society, and in this way to free the world to the same extent from all the immense injury which they are now inflicting on the human family. Is not this a noble, a holy and Godlike enterprise? It is certainly one of which the Lord of the Universe must approve. It is one in the advancement of which angels would rejoice to minister. It is an enterprise therefore of which females of the first attainments and highest rank in other parts of the world, consider it alike their duty and their honour to enrol themselves as supporters—nor is their character sullied; it is rather ennobled by their co-operation in such an undertaking. The female part of Society have certainly their full share of suffering from the ravage of intemperance, but less sympathy will assuredly be due them if they, either from false delicacy or cold indifference, refuse to co-operate in such a plan as this for its suppression.

A second Conclusion, which the admission of the preceding propositions forces upon us is, *that it is morally wrong to furnish or sell Ardent Spirits to the community, now that their nature and effects are so fully understood.* I wish not and hope not to give offence, but faithfulness, both to myself and to those engaged in the traffic in these liquors, and a regard for the welfare of Society, forbid me to shrink from a true exhibition of the nature and criminality of the business. I am not going to blame any for having heretofore embarked in the business of importing and vending these liquors. We have all been guilty in countenancing the use of them and promoting the traffic in them. While all classes were accustomed to use Ardent Spirits, and to regard them almost as a necessary of life, it was naturally to be expected that men of every description would engage in the manufacture and sale of them. But when the destructive nature of these Spirits and the baneful tendency of the traffic in them are understood, and clearly exhibited to the view of all, the state of the case is altogether changed. Men cannot now, contemplating the business in its influence on Society in that light which has of late been poured upon it, resolve to commence or continue it without virtually declaring, that they estimate their gains at a higher rate than the health, the morals, the temporal prosperity and the eternal welfare, of their fellow men.

Where is the country or community which was ever benefited by the use of these Spirits? Does not all experience testify that they are a curse to mankind wherever they are known—that the use of them invariably produces a diminution of industry, and an increase of poverty, vice, and misery, in every country; and just in proportion to the extent to which it prevails? And are the manufacturers, importers, and venders of these liquors not aware of this? Are they not aware that the articles which they are providing and dealing out, are destroying, and destroying to an awful extent, not the temporal interests and happiness merely, but the bodies and the souls of men—and being aware of this can they continue, merely for the sake of gain, recklessly to provide and send these liquors abroad, like streams of burning lava, over the country, to scorch and devour every good thing that is found in their way; or measure them out to drinkers for pence and shillings, from taverns and dram shops, and still say that their hands are free from the blood of their fellow men? Let it not be said, that because those who receive them are rational beings and free agents, the sellers are not accountable for the effects these spirits are producing. Were a portion of this community under some awful infatuation to become so fond of arsenic as to be willing to sacrifice their lives to gratify their unnatural appetite, would any conscientious man feel himself at liberty to send and import this poison from foreign lands, and retail it out for shillings and pence, to all who would purchase from him, while the houses of the surrounding neighbourhood were filling with the dying and the dead, the victims of this fatal propensity? Or would any such person attempt to justify himself in such a traffic, by saying that he might as well poison his neighbours and have the gain of it, because if he did not others would? Would he not say, whatever others do I cannot participate in this work of death—nay more, would he not feel himself obligated by duty, and constrained by a compassionate regard for the interests of all concerned, to do all in his power to dissuade the one class of his fellow men from importing and vending, and the other from using, this deadly drug?

Just as far as the conscientious and reflecting of mankind can be brought to a serious and candid consideration of the subject, this will be the language and conduct of all concerning ardent spirits, and the traffic in them. The time is obviously not distant when public sentiment will lay an interdict on the trade in th

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liquors, or confine it to those alone who are regardless of character. The man who devotes his life to the manufacture or sale of distilled spirits, will ere long be accounted as useful and respectable a member of society as the gambler or slave dealer. Things are fast approaching this consummation so devoutly to be wished for, in the United States; and every arrival brings us fresh accounts of the rapid progress of the cause in Britain. Among other evidences of the change which Temperance Societies are working upon public opinion, even in high quarters, I may mention that the Duke of Wellington has lately recommended in strong language the formation of these societies in the British Army, as a measure which would be productive of the most beneficial results.

Let not the stale and oft-answered objection that "all the creatures of God are good and to be received with thanksgiving" be brought in here, as a reason for continuing the manufacture or importation or sale of Distilled Spirits. Were they healthful and nourishing, as a drink or a part of diet when used habitually in moderation, there might be some force in this objection. But this is not the case. All the creatures of God are doubtless good, inasmuch as they all answer the ends of their creation; but this surely does not prove that they are all good for food or drink. The deadly hemlock and henbane, arsenic and opium, are as much the creatures of God as corn and rice—salt water is as much a creature of God as fresh—stones are as much the creatures of God as bread; but will any argue that because all these are the creatures of God, and good, as answering the ends of their creation, we are allowed or required to use them all as food or drink? Besides it ought ever to be kept in view, that these liquors exist not but by the ingenuity of man, and that the use to which his ingenuity is in this case turned is heinously criminal. Is there nothing sinful in converting upwards of thirty one millions of Bushels of grain, as is done every year in Britain and Ireland, into this liquid fire? This immense quantity if thrown into the market would, it is calculated, lower the price of bread and butchers' meat one half to the inhabitants of these lands, and influence to an extent hardly credible the price of other commodities. When God in his goodness causes a land to yield fruit abundantly, for the supply of its wants, is there nothing wrong in his creature man stepping in upon him and the objects of his bounty, and converting the

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food intended for them into poison, and then measuring out poison to them instead of bread for the sake of gain? And is there nothing wrong in others aiding and abetting him in this work of destruction, by becoming the purchasers and venders of his productions?

I would only add, that he who surveys society as it now is, the work of reformation now going on, without lending it countenance and aid, ought to ponder seriously this inspired monition, for it is pointed at him—"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn to death, and those that are ready to slay, if thou sayest, behold we knew it not, doth not he that pondereth the heart consider, and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it, and shall not he render to every man according to his works?"

FINIS.

